

REMARKS

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated September 23, 2005. Prior to entry of the present Amendment, claims 1-41 were pending in the application. Pursuant to this Amendment, claims 1-41, directed to the species designated by the Examiner in the July 26, 2005 Restriction Requirement as a-1, b-2, and c-1, have been cancelled without prejudice. Further pursuant to this Amendment, claims 42-88, which are directed toward species a-3, b-2, and c-1, have been added.

In regards to claims 1-41, the claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,319,306 to Edlund et al. ("Edlund") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,413,449 to Wieland et al. ("Wieland"). Applicant has studied the cited references in view of the original claims and the reasons expressed in the Office action. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner that the subject matter of all of the examined claims is rendered obvious by the cited references. However, claims 1-41 have been cancelled without prejudice, as Applicant now wishes to pursue claims directed to a different one of the species identified by the Examiner in the previous restriction requirement. Applicant is not intending to abandon the subject matter of the original claims, and Applicant understands that prosecution of these claims may be resumed in a related application. As discussed below, Applicant believes claims 42-88 to be allowable in view of Edlund and Wieland because these references fail to disclose or suggest the hydrogen-producing reformers recited in new claims 42-88.

Newly Added Claims

Claims 42-88 are newly added in this Amendment. The claims derive support from the specification and are directed to the above-mentioned chromium oxide-containing species that was identified by the Examiner.

Claims 42-62 recite a hydrogen-producing fuel processing system comprising, amongst other subject matter, a reforming region with a catalyst that contains a mixture of at least 20% zinc oxide and at least 20 wt% chromium oxide. Similarly, claims 63-88 recite hydrogen-producing steam reformers with the improvement of catalytic means comprising at least 20% zinc oxide and at least 20 wt% chromium oxide. Pages 10-13 of the specification specifically discuss catalysts containing zinc oxide and chromium oxide, such as those recited in claims 42-88.

Neither Edlund or Wieland disclose a catalyst as recited in claims 42-88. Edlund discloses a steam reforming catalyst in general, but does not provide specific details, much less disclose steam reforming catalysts with the compositions recited in claims 42-88. The Wieland catalyst contains zinc oxide but does not disclose or suggest any use of chromium oxide. Instead the catalyst of Wieland contains between 1 and 50% zinc oxide and between 0.5 and 10% palladium zinc alloy. Further, the Wieland catalyst is supported by a support material.

Accordingly, neither Edlund or Wieland, nor any combination thereof, discloses the subject matter recited in the new claims 42-88. For at least these reasons, Applicant believes that claims 42-88 are allowable in view of Edlund and Wieland, as well as the other references of record.

Applicant believes that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions, or if the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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